

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Claims 3, 4, 13, 14, 22, 23, 26 and 27 have been canceled. New Claims 30-33 have been introduced. Claims 30 and 32 are respectively based upon Claims 1 and 20 but recite that the valve is within the body of the fuel cell. Claims 31 and 33 are respectively based upon Claims 11 and 24 but recite that the valve is within the body of the hydrogen gas supply portion.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112 is believed to be moot in light of the cancellation of the rejected dependent claims 3, 4, 13, 14, 22, 23, 26 and 27.

Claims 1-9 and 11-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by either European patent publication 813264 (Gamo et al.) or U.S. patent 6,569, 552 (Kato et al.). Applicants wish to thank Examiners Hodge and Bell for the courtesy of an interview on November 10, 2004 at which time the above rejections were discussed. Specifically, Applicants there pointed out that the cited references do not disclose hydrogen gas flow valves which are integrated into the body of the fuel cell or hydrogen gas supplying portion as was recited in the claims, nor was such alleged in the Office Action. Applicants also pointed out that providing the valves integrated into the body of the fuel cell or the hydrogen gas supplying portion provides advantages including those described on pages 14 and 15 of the specification. In response, the Examiners reiterated that they interpreted the phrase "integrated into" to be readable upon constructions wherein the valves are located or connected anywhere in the fuel cell system and/or hydrogen supply system and is not limited to those located within the body of the fuel cell or hydrogen gas supplying portion, *per se*. On the other hand, the Examiners indicated that amending the claims to recite that the valve is provided "within" the respective port and is "integral with" the respective one of the body of the fuel cell or hydrogen gas supplying portion would distinguish over this prior art.

Claims 1, 11, 20 and 24 have therefore been so amended and so are believed to define over the cited prior art.

Additionally, new Claims 30-33 respectively correspond to Claims 1, 11, 20 and 24 but instead recite that the valve is provided "within" the respective port and is "within" the body of the respective one of the fuel cell and hydrogen gas supplying portion. These claims are therefore also believed to define over the prior art.

The specification and drawings have been amended to more clearly identify the ports recited in the claims.

Concerning paragraph 1 of the Office Action, the Examiner's attention is drawn to the fact that the Information Disclosure Statement filed on April 18, 2003 was filed together with an English translation of a German Office Action which cited the relevant references. As pointed out during the interview, this satisfies the requirements of M.P.E.P. §609(III)(A3), and so it is respectfully requested that the cited references be considered and made of record.

Applicants therefore believe that the present application is in a condition for allowance and respectfully solicit an early notice of allowability.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE DRAWINGS

Please enter the new sheet of Figures 2 and 3, in which Fig. 2 has been amended to provide reference numbers for the fuel cell body 100A, the port 100B and the port 100C. Fig. 3 has been amended to provide reference numbers for the body 200A and the port 200B.